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ABSTRACT

THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THIS DOCUMENT: If you teach a composition class which is affiliated with a subject-matter course, one of the following assignments may be appropriate for your students. If, on the other hand, you teach a traditionallly constituted composition class, you might give your students the entire list with instructions to select an assignment for which they can draw material from one of their other courses. Some of the assignments, the one for biology, for example, can be adapted to other courses. BIOLOGY: Compare all or part of a lay work, for example, Lewis Thomas' "Lives of a Cell" or Aldo Leopold's "Sand County Almanac," with a technical discussion of a related area in your biology textbook. Discuss the functions of each work, any conflicts or complementary areas, authors' attitudes, points of view, tone. (Adapted from Jon Olson, University of Southern California.) AMERICAN HISTORY: Point out some differences in the Colonial American North and South, such things as the geography or the educational system. Then select one aspect and relate it to future events and/or attitudes in America. Discuss your main topic in depth, including important ideas, events, or other factors which influenced the situations and developments you are writing about. SOCIOLOGY: Place yourself in a situation where you are outside your "group" (ethnic, socio-economic, age, religious, educational, etc.). Then compare/contrast the group you are visiting with the group of which you are a member. What do you observe? Be as non-judgmental as possible in describing what you see and hear. Discuss several areas briefly and then deal in depth with one you consider especially significant. PSYCHOLOGY: Ask advice on the same matter from at least three people you know, for example, peers, teachers, older or younger acquaintances. From what you know of these people, predict their responses, then compare your predictions with the actual results, trying to account for variances between your predictions and actual results. CHEMISTRY: Describe a chemical reaction that you have learned in class so that it can be understood by someone with "chemistry anxiety" (someone who believes that he or she cannot understand chemistry). Make the description relevant to your audience by relating it to something in his experience. You might, for example, explain how gas behaves by relating it to gas escaping from a carbonated-beverage bottle. PHILOSOPHY: Select a work from your philosophy course texts and discuss the importance of the work's ideas to your generation compared to the importance of the same ideas when the work was written. If you have been dealing with modern philosophical writers, speculate on the importance of their ideas twenty-five years from now. It might help to think about the differences between your world and that of your parents when they were your age. FINE ARTS/ART HISTORY: Describe your impressions of a painting or other work of art about which you have no background information, not even the name of its creator. Then research the work to find out when it was done, by whom, where, and what circumstances may have influenced its creation. Discuss how your research affected your initial impression. Were your earlier views reinforced? Modified? In your discussion, include specific information from your research which changed or reinforced your original views. BUSINESS (communications, accounting, economics): Select one of the systems or procedures discussed in your textbook or class and find what you believe to be a representation of it in the real world. Describe both the classroom model and the real example. Discuss the changes necessary to adapt the model to the real situation. Evaluate the effectiveness of both the model and the real example in terms of the purpose of each. Can you suggest improvements? (Author)

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: WRITING ASSIGNMENTS
TWI Resource File

Shirley Rish, and Wendy Lapidus-Saltz

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Shirley Rish and Wendy Lapidus-Saltz

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